DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 116 518 HE 006 841

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TITLE	Graduate No-Show Study, Fall 1974.
INSTITUTION	Western Illinois Univ., Macomb.
REPORT NO	IRP-99-75
PUB DATE	74
NOTE	15p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Western Illinois University, Institutional Research and Planning, Room 312, Sherman Hall, Macomb, Illinois 61455
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	*Enrollment Influences; *Financial Problems; Financial Services; *Followup Studies; *Graduate Students; *Higher Education; Questionnaires; School Surveys; Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	Illinois

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to follow up students who were admitted to the Graduate School at Western Illinois University but failed to enroll. The study is designed to (1) evaluate present services to potential graduate students and (2) better predict what proportion of accepted applicants will enroll. The no-shows are compared for the Fall Quarters of 1971, 1972, and 1974 and are analyzed by sex, mean GRE scores, residence, and undergraduate rank in class. The reasons for not attending WIU are analyzed for those attending some other graduate school as well as for those not enrolled elsewhere. The most frequently cited reasons involved financial problems. A series of recommendations resulted from this study including improving correspondence with prospective students, and increasing financial aid. (JMF)

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GRADUATE NO-SHOW STUDY

Fall 1974

IRP-99-75

Prepared by

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February, 1975

HE 006 841

GRADUATE NO-SHOW STUDY

This is the fourth in a series of studies which attempts to follow up students who were admitted to the Graduate School at Western Illinois University but failed to enroll Fall Quarter. This study is designed to (1) evaluate present services to potential graduate students and (2) better predict what proportion of accepted applicants will enroll.

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the Graduate Office in the gathering of information on both enrollees and no-shows.

Table I compares graduate admissions for the Fall Quarters of 1971, 1972, and 1974. (A breakdown by geographic origin was not available for 1974.) The percent of 1974 applicants accepted shows a slight increase over 1972. In 1971, 80.4 percent of those who applied were accepted, while in 1972 only 63.1 percent were accepted. In 1974, 66.9 percent of those who applied were accepted. The proportion of those accepted who enrolled has increased since 1971. In spite of the steady increase in the percent enrolled during the periods of 1971, 1972, and 1974; however, the 62.6 percent enrollment rate in 1974 was still slightly lower than the 64.5 percent figure found in a similar study in 1970.

Respondents included 55 men and 34 women. Thus, the males were 61.8 percent of the respondents and the females were 38.3 percent. This was very similar to the ratio of enrolled graduate students, which was 61.7 percent males and 38.3 percent females.

Table II shows the mean scores on the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE for the 1972 and 1974 no-shows. The table also shows the mean verbal and quantitative scores for enrolled students at W.I.U. as well as the mean scores for the national normative sample.

The 1974 mean verbal score of 524.3 for the no-shows was slightly higher than the mean verbal score of 509.1 for the 1972 group. However, both the 1972 and 1974 mean verbal scores were much higher than the mean score of 466 for enrolled W.I.U. students and the mean score of 497 for the national normative sample.

In quantitative ability, the 1974 mean score of 531.7 for no-show students was slightly lower than the mean quantitative score of 539.9 for the 1972 no-show group. Thus, the mean quantitative scores for the 1972 and 1974 no-show groups were higher than the mean of 506 for enrolled W.I.U. students and the national mean score of 512.

TABLE I

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Geographic Origin	APPLICATIONS Received			APPLICATIONS Accepted			Percent Accepted			Number Enrolled			Percent Enrolled		
	1971	1972	1974	1971	1972	1974	1971	1972	1974	1971	1972	1974	1971	1972	1974
Illinois	456	437		4[illegible]	340		91.7	81.3		259	214		62.0	63.0	
Out-of-State	227	280		191	179		84.1	63.9		80	77		41.9	43.0	
Foreign	205	208		65	65		51.2	31.3		37	44		39.0	67.7	
TOTAL	888	925	952	714	584	637	80.4	63.1	66.9	372	335	399	53.2	57.4	62.6

TABLE II

GRE SCORES

GRE Scores	VERBAL ABILITY No-Show 1974	No-Show 1972	* W.I.U.	** National	QUANTITATIVE ABILITY No-Show 1974	No-Show 1972	* W.I.U.	** National
No. of Scores	100	92	1,416	852,197	100	92	1,416	851,915
MEAN	524.3	509.1	466	497	531.7	539.9	506	512

* NORMS based on the performance of 1,416 graduate students enrolled at W.I.U. between Fall Quarter 1971 and Fall Quarter 1973.

** NORMS based on the performance of candidates taking GRE from May 1969 through April 1972.

Place of residence is categorized in Table III, with approximately one-half (52.87 percent) from large cities over 25,000. In 1971 and 1972, approximately half of the men (56.9 and 50.6 percent respectively) came from large cities, compared with 60.4 percent in 1974. The percentage of women who resided in large cities in 1972 was 61.0, compared to 41.2 percent in 1974. Women residing in small cities (population 2,000-25,000) decreased from 36.7 percent in 1971 to 24.2 percent in 1972, and increased to 44.1 percent in 1974.

The percentage of rural residents dropped from 18.9 and 16.1 percent in 1971 and 1972, respectively, to 8.0 percent in 1974. There was a corresponding increase in the percentage of small city residents, with the total percentage increasing from 29.7 to 39.1 percent between 1972 and 1974. There was a marked decrease in the percentage of men from rural areas, with this group totaling 16.9 percent in 1971 and 1972, and dropping to 3.8 percent in 1974.

Table IV shows the distribution of respondents by undergraduate rank in class as reported by them on the questionnaire. A total of 88.8 percent responded to this item with 89.9 percent indicating a rank in the upper half of their graduating class. The number of students in the lower half of their graduating class increased from 3.5 and 3.7 percent in 1971 and 1972, respectively, to 10.1 percent in 1974. The number of women in the lower half of their class increased from 0.0 percent in 1971 and 1972, to 12.1 percent in 1974. There was also an increase (of less magnitude) in the percent of men in the lower half of their class.

One-half (50.6 percent) were enrolled in another graduate school. There was very little change in the percentage of men who planned to attend another institution. However, the percentage of women respondents who selected another graduate school increased from 31.0 percent in 1972 to 47.1 percent in 1974.

Table VI outlines the reasons given for not enrolling at another institution. Financial problems were most frequently cited as the reason for non-attendance, whether the respondents were male or female. Reasons were ranked as follows: (1) inadequate personal finances and chose to work rather than attend school; (2) school I desired to attend was unable to offer enough financial assistance; (3) personal matters dictated I get work; (4) marriage; and (5) health problems.

While the rank order of the 1974 responses was slightly different from those in 1971 and 1972, they were still quite smaller. In general, the responses under the "other" category tended to deal in the inability to select courses or desired programs, or the fact that the student didn't want to attend school at this time.

TABLE III

PLACE OF RESIDENCE

RESIDENCE	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN			
	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971
Rural Resident (Less Than 2000)	7	8.0	16.1	18.9	2	3.8	16.9	16.9	5	14.7	14.6	23.2
Small City Resident (2000-25,000)	34	39.1	29.7	29.5	19	35.8	32.5	26.2	15	44.1	24.2	36.7
Large City Resident (over 25,000)	46	52.9	54.2	51.6	32	60.4	50.6	56.9	14	41.2	61.0	40.0
TOTAL	87	100.0	100.0	100.0	53	100.0	100.0	100.0	34	100.0	100.0	100.0
No Response	2				2				0			

TABLE IV

ENROLLMENT STATUS

RANK	TOTAL				MALE				FEMALE			
	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971
Upper ½	45	57.0	51.4	55.3	23	5.0	48.6	50.0	22	66.7	57.1	68.0
Second ¼	26	32.9	44.9	41.2	19	41.3	45.8	45.0	7	21.2	42.9	32.0
Lower ¼	8	10.1	3.7	3.5	4	8.7	5.6	5.0	4	12.1	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	79	100.0	100.0	100.0	46	100.0	100.0	100.0	33	100.0	100.0	100.0
No Response	10				9				1			

TABLE V

ENROLLMENT STATUS

ENROLLED	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN			
	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971
YES	45	50.6	47.1	47.4	29	52.7	55.8	46.2	16	47.1	31.0	33.3
NO	44	49.4	52.9	52.6	26	47.3	44.2	53.8	18	52.9	69.0	66.7
TOTAL	89	100.0	100.0	100.0	55	100.0	100.0	100.0	34	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE VI

REASONS FOR NOT ENROLLING IN ANOTHER GRADUATE SCHOOL

RESPONSES	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN			
	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971
A. Entered Military	0	0	3.2	2.0	0	0	5.9	3.3	0	0	0	0
B. Health Problem	2	4.5	1.6	0	0	0	2.9	0	2	11.1	0	0
C. Inadequate Personal Finances	17	38.6	39.7	42.0	13	50.0	29.4	33.3	4	22.2	51.7	55.0
D. School Unable to Offer Fin. Aid	9	20.5	11.1	18.0	7	26.9	2.9	20.0	2	11.1	20.7	15.0
E. I Must Get Work	6	13.6	22.2	14.0	4	15.4	17.7	13.3	2	11.1	27.6	15.0
F. I Chose to Get Work	17	38.6	41.3	30.0	7	26.9	47.1	30.0	10	55.6	34.5	30.0
G. I Was Married	3	6.8	6.4	12.0	1	3.8	8.8	3.3	2	11.1	3.5	25.0
H. Other	12	27.2	30.2	20.0	9	34.6	41.2	16.7	3	16.7	17.2	25.0
TOTAL	66	100.0	100.0	100.0	41	100.0	100.0	100.0	25	100.0	100.0	100.0

Reasons for not attending Western for those enrolled elsewhere are shown in Table VII, along with the 1971 and 1972 response rates. The five choices most often checked were, in order of frequency: (1) inadequate financial aids; (2) attendance at a school near home became desirable; (3) did not feel area of study selected was a strong department at W.I.U.; (4) written responses were not prompt; and (5) the area of study selected was unavailable at W.I.U. and correspondence with University officials proved unsatisfactory.

The percentage of students who indicated their selected area of study was unavailable dropped from 26.7 percent in 1970 to 19.6 in 1972, and to 8.9 percent in 1974. At the same time, the percentage of students who felt that the department they selected was not a strong department at W.I.U. dropped from 28.9 percent in 1971 to 19.6 in 1972 and 15.6 in 1974. This may indicate that the reputation of W.I.U. graduate programs has improved.

The "other" responses tended to elaborate on previously checked items. Ten of the students indicated that the awarding of assistantships was a problem. These students applied for assistantships at W.I.U. and indicated they had heard nothing further, or else were awarded assistantships so late in the year that they had already accepted assistantships at other schools. Three students felt graduate housing was inadequate and that few single rooms were available. Two students specifically indicated that they were not notified as to their acceptance status.

Over 39 percent of the no-shows ranked Western as their first choice at the time they applied. Table VIII seems to indicate that Western was being seriously considered by 58.6 percent of our no-shows (first, second or third choice), while 33.3 percent could be classified as only marginally interested at that time they applied.

The 45 enrolled respondents were located on 34 different campuses in 19 states. Table IX shows these institutions and their location. Approximately 35 percent were enrolled in Illinois schools, as compared with 40.0 percent in 1972. Senior public institutions in Illinois seem to have attracted the no-show students more than any other institutions. This is the same trend that was seen in the 1972 study.

Information on the majors selected by the respondents indicated most were enrolled in majors offered at Western or closely related to our present curriculum. Table X shows the majors reported by the 45 enrolled students. In 1974, the English area enrolled eight students, followed by Psychology and School Psychology with three students each. In 1972 the list was headed by Psychology with nine students, followed by English with seven and Business Administration and Guidance and Counseling with four students each. In 1972, English was the only major with three or more students enrolled elsewhere.

TABLE VII

REASONS FOR NOT ATTENDING WIU FOR THOSE ENROLLED ELSEWHERE

REASONS	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN			
	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971
A. Financial Aids Inadequate	20	44.4	39.3	37.8	16	55.2	34.9	40.0	4	25.0	33.9	30.0
B. Printed Materials Inadequate	3	6.7	7.1	6.6	1	3.4	9.3	8.6	2	12.5	0	0
C. Campus Visit Changed Plans	1	2.2	3.6	4.4	0	0	4.7	2.9	1	6.2	0	10.0
D. Area of Study Unavailable	4	8.9	19.6	26.7	4	13.8	23.2	31.4	0	0	7.7	10.0
E. Not Strong Dept. at W.I.U.	7	15.6	19.6	28.9	4	13.8	16.3	31.4	3	18.8	30.8	20.0
F. Academic Reg. too Strict	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G. Acadmic Reg. too Liberal	0	0	1.8	0	0	0	2.3	0	0	0	0	0
H. Requirements for Masters too Liberal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
I. Attendance Near Home Became Desirable	16	35.6	30.4	15.6	7	24.1	30.2	11.4	9	56.2	30.8	30.0
J. Correspondence Unsatisfactory	4	8.9	12.5	11.1	4	13.8	14.0	8.6	0	0	7.7	20.0
K. Housing Unsatisfactory	3	6.7	7.1	4.4	2	6.9	9.3	5.7	1	6.2	0	0
L. Written Responses not Prompt	5	11.1	7.1	13.3	3	10.3	2.3	11.4	2	12.5	23.1	20.0
M. Other	13	28.9	17.9	15.6	7	24.1	23.3	17.1	6	37.5	0	10.0
TOTAL	76	*	*	*	48	*	*	*	28	*	*	*

*Percentages total more than 100.0 due to multiple responses. Percentages based on number of respondents ~~enrolled~~ enrolling elsewhere rather than number of responses.

TABLE VIII

RANKING OF WIU AT TIME OF APPLICATION

CHOICE	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN			
	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971	1974 No.	% 1974	% 1972	% 1971
FIRST	34	39.1	40.7	38.5	21	39.6	31.5	38.1	13	38.2	57.5	39.3
SECOND	17	19.5	23.9	18.6	11	20.8	28.9	14.3	6	17.6	15.0	28.6
THIRD	7	8.0	8.0	11.0	5	9.4	9.5	15.9	2	5.9	5.0	0
ONE OF SEVERAL	29	33.3	27.4	31.9	16	30.2	30.1	31.7	13	38.2	22.5	32.1
TOTAL	87	99.9*	100.0	100.0	53	100.0	100.0	100.0	34	99.9*	100.0	100.0
NO RESPONSE	2				2				0			

* Does not total 100.0 because of rounding error.

TABLE IX

INSTITUTIONS SELECTED BY ENROLLED NO-SHOWS

SCHOOL AND LOCATION	NUMBER
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona	1
Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio	1
Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island	1
Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut	1
Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois	5
Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana	1
John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio	1
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio	1
Moorhead State College, Moorhead, Minnesota	1
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, Missouri	1
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois	1
Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois	2
Ohio University, Athens, Ohio	1
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma	1
Sangamon State University, Springfield, Illinois	1
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois	3
State University College, Oswego, New York	2
University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona	1
University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio	1
University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware	1
University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, Illinois	1
University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois	3
University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas	2
University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky	1
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota	1
University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri	1
University of Nebraska, Omaha, Nebraska	1
University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana	1
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee	1
University of Texas, Houston, Texas	1
University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio	1
West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia	1
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan	1
Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas	1
TOTAL	45

TABLE X

MAJORS AND MINORS OF ENROLLED NO-SHOWS

MAJORS	# of People	MINORS	# of People
Accounting	2	Accounting	1
Applied Math	1	Audiology	1
Aquatic Physiology	1	Botany	2
Business	2	German	1
Business Education	1	International Relations	1
Clinical Psychology	1	Organizational Behavior	1
Early Childhood	1	Wildlife	1
Economics	2		
English	8		
English Education	1		
Health	1		
Mathematics	1		
Music Education	1		
Neurobiology	1		
Organizational Administration	1		
Oriental Studies	1		
Physical Education	2		
Physical Geography	1		
Political Science	1		
Psychology	3		
Public Management	1		
School Psychology	3		
Social Psychology	1		
Sociology	2		
Soviet Studies	1		
Speech Pathology	2		
Zoology	2		
TOTALS	45	TOTALS	8

Additional comments were mixed with several expressing favorable opinions about W.I.U. Seven students indicated they were very satisfied with written correspondence and personal contact they had with individual departments. Five students expressed satisfaction with programs at W.I.U. Nine students indicated they were still considering enrolling at W.I.U. at some time in the future. Negative comments generally were related to slow responses concerning admission status and financial aid. Four students indicated they didn't enroll because they didn't hear or heard too late about their assistantship status. Three students said that after the initial contact they either heard nothing or waited several months for another contact.

Summary

A questionnaire sent to 228 graduate no-shows for Fall Quarter of 1974 was returned by 89 (39.0 percent) of the group. Graduate Record Examination mean scores were higher in the verbal and lower in the quantitative sections of the tests compared to the 1972 no-show group. Both the verbal and quantitative mean scores were higher than the mean of enrolled W.I.U. students and also higher than the national mean.

Half of the no-shows enrolled at another graduate school with the majority checking some type of financial problem as the reason for non-attendance in graduate school. Inadequate financial aid and the student choosing to work were the most frequent reasons given for not attending Western by those not enrolled elsewhere.

The 45 enrolled in graduate school were located on 34 different campuses in 19 states. Approximately 36.0 percent were enrolled in the state of Illinois. While no single school had more than five students, the public institutions of Illinois enrolled a smaller proportion in 1974 than in 1972.

The proportion of those students who applied and were accepted increased from 63.1 percent in 1972 to 66.9 percent in 1974. A slight increase (5.2 percent) in the enrollment rate over 1972 was achieved.

Recommendations

1. Due to the similarity between the responses of 1971, 1972 and 1974, this study should be repeated only every two years to look at trends in graduate enrollment.

2. The Graduate Office and the academic departments should continue to improve correspondence with prospective students, especially in terms of admission status, but also in terms of providing information about the program itself and proper admission procedures.

3. As recommended in 1971 and 1972, increased financial aid appears to be a prime factor in attracting additional capable graduate students to Western.

4. In regard to assistantships, every effort should continue to be made to provide information, continued correspondence and prompt notification of awards for the students.

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF APPLICANTS FOR GRADUATE ADMISSION

Please complete the following form and return to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, Sherman 312, Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois 61455, using the enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid envelope:

_____
Last Name First Middle Initial

I. Have you enrolled in a Graduate School this fall? _____Yes _____No

II. If you have, please indicate:

A. Name of School _____
B. Location of School _____
C. Graduate Major _____ Minor(s) _____

III. If you are not now a student, please check the most applicable reason(s) for not enrolling in Western's Graduate School:

___A. Entered military service
___B. Health problem prohibited school attendance
___C. Inadequate personal finances
___D. School I desired to attend was unable to offer me enough financial assistance
___E. Personal matters dictated that I get work
___F. I chose to work rather than attend school
___G. I was married
___H. Other (Please specify) _____
_____

IV. If enrolled elsewhere, please check the most applicable reason(s) for not attending Western Illinois University:

___A. Financial aids were not adequate for my need
___B. Printed material did not provide an adequate description of what I needed to know
___C. My campus visit caused me to change my plans
___D. I selected an area of study not available at WIU
___E. I did not feel the area of study I selected was a strong department at WIU
___F. The academic regulations at WIU seemed too strict for me
___G. The academic regulations at WIU seemed too liberal for me
___H. The requirements for a Master's degree at WIU were too difficult
___I. Attendance at a school nearer my home became desirable
___J. Correspondence with University Officials proved unsatisfactory
___K. I did not find University housing satisfactory
___L. Written responses were not prompt enough
Please explain any of the responses you made to the above: _____
_____
_____

___M. Other reasons? _____
_____

V. When you applied for admission at Western Illinois University, how did it rank among the schools you considered?

___A. My first choice
___B. My second choice
___C. My third choice
___D. One of several choices

VI. To assist us in tabulating these data please check the characteristics below which best describe you:

___Male ___Female

___Rural Resident (less than 2000)
___Small City Resident (2000 - 25,000)
___Large City Resident (over 25,000)

I was graduated from college in the: (mark only one) ___Upper 1/4 of my class
___Second 1/4 of my class ___Lower 1/2 of my class

If completed by parent, please check here ___.

VII. Additional comments, if any: